

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By the *Office Action* of 19 August 2010, Claims 24-33, 37 and 45-46 are pending in the Application, Claims 45-46 withdrawn, Claim 29 noted as allowable, and Claims 24-28, 30-33 and 37 rejected. Applicant thanks Examiner with appreciation for the careful consideration and examination given to the Application.

Applicant submits this *Response and Amendment* solely to facilitate prosecution. As such, Applicant reserves the right to present new or additional claims in this Application that have similar or broader scope as originally filed. Applicant also reserves the right to present additional claims in a later-filed continuation application that have similar or broader scope as originally filed. Accordingly, any amendment, argument, or claim cancellation presented during prosecution is not to be construed as abandonment or disclaimer of subject matter.

Clarifications are made herein to Claims 24 and 31, and Claims 27 and 29 canceled. New Claim 47 is presented.

1. The Claim Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 24-28 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,843,365 to Baker.

Allowable Claim 29 is presented as clarified Claim 24. Thus, as the Examiner kindly has indicated that Claim 29 is allowable if rewritten to include the base Claim, and any interviewing Claims, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 24 as now presented, and those Claims ultimately depending from Claim 24, are novel over Baker.

The Examiner rejects Claims 24-28 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,843,365 to Baker in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,907,978 to Evans et al.

As noted above, Claim 24 is indicated as allowable. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 24, and those Claims ultimately depending from Claim 24, are non-obvious over Baker in view of Evans et al.

The Examiner rejects Claim 31-33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Baker in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,188,010 to Borchardt et al.

Claim 31 is clarified by adding a further clarification of the at least two different types of area of the conveyor belt of the guiding means. In particular, it is now recited that the conveyor belt comprises such that the conveyor belt comprises a number of portions protruding in a sideward direction, at the location of which the conveyor belt is broadened, while the other part of the conveyor belt is narrower than the protruding portions. Support for this recitation is shown in **Fig. 4**, and the description related thereto:

The guiding belt **60** comprises a number of portions **61** protruding in a sideward direction, at the location of which the guiding belt **60** is broadened. In **Figs. 3 and 4**, a relatively narrow part of the guiding belt **60** is indicated by means of the reference numeral **62**. *US Patent Publication No. 20070170644, ¶[0032]*

Claim 31 now more clearly defines the conveyor belt, which as claimed, clearly does not cover simple width tolerances of the belt, leaving no doubt that there are at least two different types of areas in the belt, which can be clearly distinguished from each other, namely an area where there are portions protruding in a sideward direction (the belt is broadened), and an area where the belt is narrower than the protruding portions, as indicated by reference numerals **61** and **62**, respectively, in **Fig. 4**.

The specific design of the conveyor belt as recited in clarified Claim 31 is related to the concepts underlying clarified and allowable Claim 24. On the basis of the presence of the at least two different areas in the belt, it is possible to achieve the desired cancellation of the guiding function of the belt when the sheet is in the conveyance position by means of a speed difference between the belt and the first carrier. Like the method as recited in clarified Claim 24, the device comprising the belt having the specific design as recited in clarified Claim 31 is neither taught nor rendered obvious by any of the cited references, alone or in combination.

It is thus respectfully submitted that Claim 31 is non-obvious over Baker in view of Borchardt et al., and those Claims ultimately depending from Claim 31 similarly allowable.

The Examiner rejects Claim 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over to Baker in view Borchardt et al. and in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,282,528 to Hudson.

As noted above, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 31 is allowable, and those Claims

ultimately depending from Claim 31, are non-obvious over Baker in view of Borchardt et al. and in view of Hudson.

New Claim 47 is presented, and believed allowable, as it recites a device not unlike allowed Claim 24.

2. Fees

This *Response and Amendment* is being filed within six months of the *Office Action*, and more specifically within three months. Thus, no extension fees are believed due.

No additional claims fees are believed due, as the pending claim count as to both total number of claims, and independent claims, remains covered under the original filing fee.

Nonetheless, authorization is hereby expressly given to charge any further fees due via deposit account No. 20-1507.

CONCLUSION

By the present *Response and Amendment*, this Application has been placed in full condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests early and favorable action. Should the Examiner have any further questions or reservations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned Attorney at 404.885.2773.

Respectfully submitted,

Certificate of Transmission:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being submitted by e-filing to the US Patent and Trademark Office in accordance with §1.8 on this date, via the EFS-Web electronic filing system.

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